are highest for primary schooling and decline with rising levels of education, and (3) female education has higher economic returns than male education.

(b) Yes, recently it has been estimated that each year of extra schooling raises men's productivity by 8 per cent and women's productivity by 10 per cent. Another study which focuses on interstate comparisons of educational attainment of the workforce raises output by 13 per cent.

(c) The Government in its intention has not failed but is constrained by resource-availability. However, over the years, educational investment from the Government side has been stepped up. At present this investment from Government side is about 3.8 per cent of Gross Domestic Product as compared to 1.27 per cent in 1950-51. The Government intends to step this investment further particularly at the primary school stage. The action Plan on Social infrastructure has been integrated with the draft Ninth Five Year Plan and consequently the allocation for education is proposed to be stepped up. Further, Planning Commission has constituted a Committee of Experts on current status of expenditure on Education. The Committee met in July, 1998 and it draft reprot is ready which is going to be discussed shortly in its second meeting. The Committee is looking into the strategy for ensuring a gradual increase in spending on education to 6% GDP as part of its term of reference and suggests measures how it can be increased over the coming Five Year Plan.

Infrastructure equalisation for North-Eastern Region

1062. SHRI W. ANGOU SINGH: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whetehr the Ninth Five Year Plan has been completed and published and by when will the copy of it be received; and

(b) whether as for the North-Eastern States which are lagging far behind the National average for their infrastructure equalisation plan have been given provision to bring them up to the National average?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRI RAM NAIK): (a) The Ninth Five Year Plan has been approved by the National Development Council (NDC) in its meeting held on 19th February, 1999. The copy of the Ninth Plan placed before the NDC is available in the Parliament Library. The approved Plan Document will be also laid on the table of the Hosue is due course.

(b) A non-lapsable Central Pool of Resources for the North-East and Sikkim has been constituted for assisting development projects, including in the infrastructure sector, in these States. Release amounting to Rs. 93.10 crore have since been made for the projects (including some recommended by the High Level Commission covered in the New Initiatives for the North-Eastern Region) in the North East.

Improvement of Social Services for Handicapped People

1063. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that adequate importance is not being given to improvement of social services and encouragement to handicapped people in Ninth Plan;

(b) whether it is also a fact that socia services for handicapped people have been categorised as non-essential or not having adequate merit;

(c) what are the reasons for the neglect illions of people in this category; and

(d) the steps proposed to give adequate importance to this sector and review existing priorities?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRI RAM NAIK): (a) and (b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise,

(d) The Ninth Plan lays special emphasis on adopting an integrated approach to empower the persons with disabilities so as to make them productive contributors to the national economy. For this purpose, efforts will be made to converge the existing services under the Social Sector and to give special attention to the rural disabled. Besides continuing existing schemes already catering to the disabled persons, it is proposed to take up a programme for rehabilitation of the persons with disabilities as a State sector Scheme for which State Governments and UT Administrations have been asked to earmark funds in their Annual Plans.

Growth Rate

1064. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether massive resource mobilisation by the Central and State Government is essential to achieve a growth rate of 6.5 per cent in the Ninth Plan period:

(b) to what extent have the states agreed to the required resource mobilisation;

(c) whether any provision has been made by the Planning Commission to raise or suggest ways to raise additional revenue and resource mobilisation; and

(d) the details of plan chalked out to achieve the growth rate of 6.5 per cent in the Ninth plan?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRI RAM NAIK): (a) (c) and (d) yes Sir. The details on this subject are already given in the Ninth Plan Document.

(b) The targets of required resource mobilisation in the Ninth Plan have been worked out after detailed discussions with all the State Governments.

Identification of Backward Areas in the Country

1065. SHRI SURYABHAN PATIL VAHADANE: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Planning Commission have decided to identify backward areas in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof, state-wise and if not, the reasons therefor; and

(c) what is the normal central assistance to the State, State-wise given from 1996 till date in this behalf?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRI RAM NAIK): (a) and (b) Planning & Development of an area and allocation of funds for the purpose is primarily the responsibility of the concerned state Government. Planning Commission have not identified any area as backward per se. However, Central Government supplements the efforts of the State Governments in the development of backward regions through appropriate weightage for backwardness in the formula used for distribution of Normal